THE FOLLOWING IS THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF THE AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS OF THE INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION UNDER PCT ARTICLE 19:

AMENDED SHEETS (Pages 66, 67, 68 and 69).

Claims (Amended)

[Received by International Bureau on 04.12.2000. Claims 1, 2, 8, 9, 15, and 16 have as originally filed have been amended. The other claims remain unchanged. (3 pages)]

1. (Amended) A cholesterol-lowering agent containing, as an active ingredient, at least one yeast belonging to *Issatchenkia, Hanseniaspora, Kloeckera, Kluyveromyces, Pichia,* or *Torulaspora.*

2. (Amended) A cholesterol-lowering agent containing, as an active ingredient, at least one yeast selected from among *Issatchenkia orientalis, Hanseniaspora uvarum, Kloeckera africana, Kluyveromyces marxianus, Kluyveromyces lactis, Pichia farinosa,* and *Torulaspora delbrueckii.*

3. Foods and drinks for reducing cholesterol containing a yeast as recited in claim 1 or 2.

4. A secondary bile acid production inhibitor containing a yeast as an active ingredient.

5. A secondary bile acid production inhibitor according to claim 4, wherein the yeast is at least one species selected from among *Issatchenkia, Kluyveromyces, Hanseniaspora, Saccharomyces, Hyphopichia, Candida, Torulaspora, Pichia,* and *Zygosaccharomyces.*

6. A secondary bile acid production inhibitor according to claim 4, wherein the yeast is at least one species selected from among *Issatchenkia orientalis, Kluyveromyces marxianus, Kluyveromyces lactis, Kluyveromyces thermotolerans, Hanseniaspora uvarum, Saccharomyces cerevisiae, Saccharomyces*

dairensis, *Saccharomyces exiguus*, *Saccharomyces unisporus*, *Saccharomyces bayanus*, *Hyphopichia burtonii*, *Candida kefyr*, *Candida etchellsii*, *Candida zeylanoides*, *Candida solani*, *Candida maltosa*, *Candida tropicalis*, *Candida cylindracea*, *Candida utilis*, *Torulaspora delbrueckii*, *Pichia anomala*, *Pichia holstii*, and *Zygosaccharomyces rouxii*.

7. A foods and drink for inhibiting secondary bile acid production containing a yeast as recited in any one of claims 4 to 6.

8. (Amended) Use, in the production of a cholesterol-lowering agent, of at least one yeast belonging to *Candida*, *Issatchenkia*, *Hanseniaspora*, *Kloeckera*, *Kluyveromyces*, *Pichia*, or *Torulaspora*.

9. Use, in the production of a cholesterol-lowering agent, of at least one yeast selected from among *Issatchenkia orientalis*, *Hanseniaspora uvarum*, *Kloeckera africana*, *Kluyveromyces marxianus*, *Kluyveromyces lactis*, *Pichia farinosa*, and *Torulaspora delbrueckii*.

10. Use of a yeast as recited in claim 1 or 2 in the production of a food and drink for reducing cholesterol.

11. Use of a yeast in the production of a secondary bile acid procution inhibitor.

12. Use according to claim 11, wherein the yeast is at least one species selected from among *Issatchenkia*, *Kluyveromyces*, *Hanseniaspora*, *Saccharomyces*, *Hyphopichia*, *Candida*, *Torulaspora*, *Pichia*, and *Zygosaccharomyces*.

13. Use of a yeast in the production of a secondary

bile acid production inhibitor according to claim 11, wherein the yeast is at least one species selected from among *Issatchenkia orientalis, Kluyveromyces marxianus, Kluyveromyces lactis, Kluyveromyces thermotolerans, Hanseniaspora uvarum, Saccharomyces cerevisiae, Saccharomyces dairensis, Saccharomyces exiguus, Saccharomyces unisporus, Saccharomyces bayanus, Hyphopichia burtonii, Candida kefyr, Candida etchellsii, Candida zeylanoides, Candida solani, Candida maltosa, Candida tropicalis, Candida cylindracea, Candida utilis, Torulaspora delbrueckii, Pichia anomala, Pichia holstii, Pachiticospora transverensis,* and *Zygosaccharomyces rouxii.*

14. Use, in the production of a food or drink for inhibiting secondary bile acid production, of a yeast as recited in any one of claims 11 to 13.

15. (Amended) A treatment method for reducing cholesterol, comprising administration of at least one yeast belonging to *Issatchenkia, Hanseniaspora, Kloeckera, Kluyveromyces, Pichia,* or *Torulaspora.*

16. (Amended) A treatment method for reducing cholesterol, comprising administration of at least one yeast selected from among *Issatchenkia orientalis, Hanseniaspora uvarum, Kloeckera africana, Kluyveromyces marxianus, Kluyveromyces lactis, Pichia farinosa,* and *Torulaspora delbrueckii.*

17. A treatment method for inhibiting secondary bile acid production, comprising administration of a yeast.

18. A method according to claim 17, wherein the yeast is at least one species selected from among *Issatchenkia, Kluyveromyces, Hanseniaspora, Saccharomyces, Hyphopichia, Candida, Torulaspora, Pichia,* and *Zygosaccharomyces.*

19. A method according to claim 17, wherein the yeast is at least one species selected from among *Issatchenkia orientalis, Kluyveromyces marxianus, Kluyveromyces lactis, Kluyveromyces thermotolerans, Hanseniaspora uvarum, Saccharomyces cerevisiae, Saccharomyces dairensis, Saccharomyces exiguus, Saccharomyces unisporus, Saccharomyces bayanus, Hyphopichia burtonii, Candida kefyr, Candida etchellsii, Candida zeylanoides, Candida solani, Candida maltosa, Candida tropicalis, Candida cylindracea, Candida utilis, Torulaspora delbrueckii, Pichia anomala, Pichia holstii, Pachiticospora transverensis,* and *Zygosaccharomyces rouxii.*